

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendment and the following remarks.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-6, 11-34 and 39 are pending in this application. Claims 11-34 and 39 have been allowed. Claims 3, 5 and 6 have been objected to. Claims 1, 2 and 4 have been rejected. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended, and claim 3 has been canceled without prejudice.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 103

Claims 1, 2 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Takahashi et al. (US 2002/0180055A1).

In the Office Action, claim 3, 5 and 6 have been indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Thus, in order to expedite prosecution and obtain a complete allowance of the present application, claim 1 has been amended herewith to include all of the limitations of claim 3 (indicated in the instant Office Action as containing allowable subject matter). As claims 2, 4, 5 and 6 depend from claim 1, these dependent claims are likewise patentable.

Applicants further note that the above amendments do not constitute an admission regarding the merits of the rejections but rather were made for the purpose of obtaining an immediate allowance of the present application.

III. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. The Examiner's early and favorable action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if he has any questions or comments in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



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